Bird, Ethel

[Bureau of Social Service, Halifax]

March 1916
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Bureau of Social Service,
31 Brunswick St,
Halifax N.S.
March 10th 1916.

Dr Robert Falconer,
Toronto University,
Toronto.

Dear Dr Falconer,

I have intended writing to you ever since President MacKenzie told me that you had within a year or two started a training for Social Workers in Toronto University. I would very much like to know whether there are special courses which you offer in connection with the regular Arts work or whether you intend it to be a course by itself covering a certain period . Is it offered only to graduates or is it open to people who have no degree but only practical experience added to High School education?

I am enquiring particularly at this time because two young women, one a third year and one a fourth year student at Dalhousie, came recently to talk to me about the opportunities for University women outside of teaching. My first impulse was to suggest the summer course at the New York School of Philanthrophy which would give them a six weeks' survey of the number of lines of Social Work, and possibly put them in the way of continuing their social training and at the same time earning part or all of their way through obtaining a scholarship or a fellowship.

I am interested, of course to see Canadian women take up new lines of service and I believe there will be more and more opportunities for them throughout the Dominion. If they could, therefore, get their training here, rather than in the States, it mean that their attention would be focussed during the course on Canadian problems and conditions and they would be more often kept in the service of their own country.

Neither of these girls have very much money at their command, (one is the daughter of a minister with a number of younger children the expenses of whose education must be met) and I do not think they feel they can be dependent upon their parents financially, for another year of education. Could you tell me whether such girls as these fit into the scheme you are developing in Toronto, and would you care to have them write you direct about the matter? Is such an arrangement ever made as this---living in a Settlement House and doing some work there in payment of board, while still leaving time free for work in the University?

Very sincerely yours

Ethel Bird

[March 10, 1916]

Dear Dr. Falconer —

I wonder if I may add a personal word? Possibly your sister, in her letters to you, has made mention of the work we are trying to establish in Halifax, so that you know at least my name. I came for the three or four months of organization, and it is the attempt to find a woman to become the permanent worker here, that has brought to my attention forcibly the dearth of Canadian women with special training for social work. I wonder if I may ask, quite in confidence, whether you know anything of Miss Shenstone whose home is in Toronto? She graduated from Bryn Mawr in 1913 and has had three years experience in the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities. She has not yet been approached, but her name is among those that are coming up for consideration by the new Board of Directors — and they would be glad if you had anything to add (from personal acquaintance with her) to the very warm recommendations we have received from those who know her work in the States.

I have had a very interesting, if a very strenuous, winter in Halifax and one of my

March 13th, 1916

Miss Ethel Bird,

Bureau of Social Service,

31 Brunswick Street, Halifax, N.S.

Dear Miss Bird:

In the absence of President Falconer I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your inquiry about the Social Service Department at the University of Toronto and to say that under separate cover I am sending you a copy of the Calendar which will give you information about our work. The Social Service Course is separate from the Faculty of Arts, though some of our Arts Professors and Lecturers give instruction also in Social Service. There are two courses, one for full-time students and at the end of a year's work passed successfully they receive a diploma, and there are part-time courses. However, the Calendar will fully explain these.

Dr. Franklin Johnson, the Director of Social Service Courses, would be glad to answer any further inquiries about the department.

Yours very truly,

President's Secretary.

March 29th, 1916

Miss E. Bird,

Halifax.

Dear Miss Bird:

On my return from the United States I find your two letters awaiting me. You have I think received our Calendar of the Department of Social Service and I hope that in it you will have procured the information that you desire. You will observe that our fees are comparatively small, much smaller than in the School of Philanthrophy in New York.

I am of opinion that we could secure places for these girls in a Settlement House, but I could not promise that they would receive their board.

If you will communicate with our Director, Dr. Franklin Johnson he will be able to give you more definite information than I have.

I have made inquiries about Miss Shenstone and from what I learn she belongs to an excellent family and is herself of very high character so that she should fill the position admirably.

Yours sincerely,

President.